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Amendments to the Drawings:

None

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Remarks

The Examiner has withdrawn the rejections of claim 1 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US 4,383,819 (Letica) and by US 5,824,256 (Ballester) and the rejection of claim 2 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over US 4,383,819 (Letica). Further, the Examiner has withdrawn indication of patentability of claims 3 and 4 and has objected to claims 5 and 6 as presented.

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 06-8286 (Mitsubishi Materials Corp.) noting in particular that the reference teaches the claimed mold assembly having an actuating pin (38) retained by means (36) that is accessible from the parting line face of the second mold component. This rejection is traversed. Comments concerning this rejection shall be made with reference to the claims as amended hereby.

JP '286 does not teach or suggest that the actuating pin is itself removably retained in a support opening in the second mold component whatsoever. Further, while JP '286 teaches that block (36) be attached to the second mold component by a fastener accessible from the parting line face of the second mold component, actuating pin 38 is not removable from the support opening in block 37 from the parting line face of the second mold component. Rather, as seen in Fig. 1 of JP '286, actuating pin (38) has an enlarged head seated against a shoulder of opening (37) of block (36). Removal of pin (38) requires that block (36) be removed from the second mold component by removing fastener (35) to allow pin (38) to be extracted from the side of block (36) opposed to the parting line face of the second mold component.

In contrast, the present invention, as now claimed, provides that the actuating pin be headless and be removably retained in the support opening in the second mold component by engagement of a notch in the pin periphery with a key removably attached to the second mold component by means accessible from the parting line face thereof. With the key and notch disengaged, the claimed arrangement permits removal of the actuating pin from the parting line face of the second mold component. The subject invention does not comprise an assembly mounted to the second mold component requiring removal of the pin from a side of the assembly opposed to the parting line face of the second mold component. Further, unlike the prior art illustrated by Figs. 4 and 5 of JP '286, the actuating pin of the present invention is

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not retained in the second mold component by engagement of threads thereon with a threaded extension of the support opening. Such an arrangement having the disadvantage of introducing variation in the projection of the actuating pin from the parting line face by any compression of mating surfaces of the pin and second mold component effected by the threaded connection thereof. In contrast, to this arrangement, the present invention, as now claimed, fixes the projection of the actuating pin from the parting line face by the location of the notch in the pin periphery.

The Examiner has rejected claims 2 – 4 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 06-8286 (Mitsubishi Materials Corp.) noting in particular that the reference teaches a peripheral land at one end of pin (38) equivalent to the notch for engaging a key. This rejection is traversed. Comments concerning this rejection shall be made with reference to the claims as amended hereby.

The actuating pin (38) of JP '286 is headed, the shoulder at the head and pin shaft seating against a shoulder of an enlarged (counterbore) portion of opening (37) in block (36). Actuating pin (38) of JP '286 is not itself removably retained in a support opening in the second mold component. Nor is actuating pin (38) itself removably retained in a support opening in block (36) by any means accessible from the parting line face of the second mold component. Because of the seating of the shoulders of pin (38) and counterbore of opening (37) removal of actuating pin (38) from block (36) requires removal of block (36) from the second mold component to allow extraction of actuating pin (38) from the side of block (36) that opposes the parting line face of the second mold component. The Examiner's conclusion that the shoulders of actuating pin (38) and counterbore of opening (37) are equivalent to the notch and key of the subject invention overlooks the functional difference between the arrangement of JP '286 and the subject invention as now claimed. In accordance with the present invention, the headless pin is retained in the support opening by engagement of the notch and key, the key being removably attached to the second mold component by means accessible from the parting line face thereof. The arrangement of the present invention allows for removal of the actuating pin from the parting line face of the second mold component.

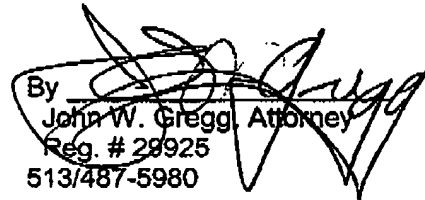
The Examiner has objected to claims 5 and 6 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, indicating that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. In light of the

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patentability of claim 1, it is contended that claims 5 and 6, dependent directly or indirectly from claim 1, are likewise patentable and this objection should be withdrawn.

In light of the amendments of the claims presented hereby, it is contended that the pending claims patentably distinguish over the references whether considered singly under 35 USC §102 or in combination under 35 USC §103. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested and an early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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